

**In the Specification:**

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 2 as follows:

“The use of object-oriented programming languages, such as C++, ~~Smalltalk~~ SMALLTALK<sup>TM</sup>, JAVA JAVA<sup>TM</sup>, and ~~Object Pascal~~ OBJECT PASCAL<sup>TM</sup>, has allowed system designers and programmers to significantly increase the design flexibility and performance of business applications in electronic commerce environments. Object-oriented programming languages allow programmers to define the data type of a data structure, and the types of operations that can be applied to the data structure. As a result, the data structure becomes an "object", which is a self-contained entity including both data and procedures (e.g., code) to manipulate the data.”

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 25, line 8 as follows:

“As mentioned earlier, the above-described example retrieval queries can be used with a DB2 database system (e.g., DB2 6.x<sup>®</sup>). These queries can also be used with other types of database systems. For example, in accordance with a second example embodiment of the present invention, a high performance sorted-paged method for retrieving objects from a relational database can be implemented for an ~~Oracle~~ ORACLE database (e.g., Oracle DB 8.1.x<sup>®</sup>). Notably, however, some ~~Oracle~~ ORACLE database system versions may be restricted somewhat if “ORDER BY” and “ROWNUM” instructions are used in conjunction with each other. For example, certain ~~Oracle~~ ORACLE database systems first number the rows and create a pseudo-column called ROWNUM and then ORDER BY. The ordering of this procedure can cause unpredictable results for a retrieval query, because the retrieval query can include a paging clause such as “ROWNUM < 51”. On the other hand, a DB2 database system is not so restricted if a “FETCH FIRST N ROWS ONLY” instruction is used in conjunction with an “ORDER BY” instruction.”

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 25, line 28 as follows:

“One technique that can be used to avoid the above-described problem for certain ~~Oracle~~ ORACLE database versions is to introduce an index hint referring to the index on the column(s) to which the “ORDER BY” instruction is being applied. The ~~Oracle~~ ORACLE database system can respond by forcing the fetch in the order dictated by the index, which is the desired sort order. However, a problem with this index hint type of approach is that it does not guarantee success. Also, index hint approaches can be affected significantly by the mode of operation of the optimizer used.”

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 26, line 7 as follows:

“In accordance with the present invention, a more reliable solution to the above-described problem with certain ~~Oracle~~ ORACLE database systems is to create a sub-query for the ORDER BY instruction including all restrictions imposed. Then, the associated super-query can be used to perform the ROWNUM operation. Consequently, the ORDER BY operation can be forced to take place before the ROWNUM operation is performed. An example of coding that can be used for such a retrieval approach is as follows:”